THE LIBRARY ASSISTANT

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS

(*Section of the Library Association*)

VOL. XLII SEPTEMBER—OCTOBER, 1949 No. 5

HON. EDITOR: J. F. W. BRYON Beckenham Public Libraries

Annual General Meeting, 1949

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

TWO HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-THREE members of the Association shared Stratford-upon-Avon with the American tourists on the occasion of the Annual General Meeting on 6th July.

The day started well for those who were able to reach Stratford in good time, for Dr. Ralph Westwood, the Librarian of Stratford-upon-Avon, had arranged a special exhibition of local material in the Central Library, and near by, Mr. Levi Fox, the Director of the Shakespeare Trust Library and Record Room, had collected together for display a fascinating selection of Shakespeareana.

An informal lunch had been arranged at two local hotels, and, after they had recovered from the informality, members went on to the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre for a matinee performance of "Much Ado About Nothing."

Your reporter was not able to attend this performance, but Mr. John Gielgud's production, with Diana Wynyard, Anthony Quayle and Leon Quartermaine in the cast, was brilliant enough to enable the youngest assistant present to overcome his recent school training in English Literature. Certainly a large and cheerful crowd of people returned to the Town Hall for tea.

The Annual General Meeting was held in the Ball Room of the Town Hall. After the minutes of the previous meeting held at Blackpool had been disposed of, the President moved, and the Honorary Secretary seconded, the Annual Report of the Council and this was duly approved, as was the Statement of Income and Expenditure for 1948, which had been moved by the Honorary Treasurer and seconded by the Honorary Editor. The Past President—E. Cave, Esq.—formally handed over the office of President to the President for 1949—Wilfred Pearson, Esq.—and the meeting proceeded to elect Mr. J. G. McPeake, F.L.A. and Mr. R. H. A. Malone, A.L.A., both of Southampton, to the office of Honorary Auditors for the current year.

Mr. A. R. Foster, A.L.A., of Birkenhead, moved "that no Chief Librarian be allowed to be an officer of the A.A.L. or of any of that Section's Divisions." In

support of his motion Mr. Foster emphasized the obvious need for the Association's affairs to be conducted by assistant librarians and his arguments were supported by Miss J. Mason, of Leeds, who seconded the motion. The Honorary Secretary opposed the motion on behalf of the Council, contending that as it stood the motion would be most harmful to the administration of the Association and that in the opinion of the Council the affairs of the Association were at present largely conducted by assistants. Occasionally, however, Divisions had honoured members who had become Chief Librarians by electing them to the Chairmanship of the Division ; the Council fully supported this action and would much prefer to see the present tradition maintained. A number of speakers, including Mr. Wisker (Wolverhampton), Mr. Marr (Sheffield) and Mr. Joyce (Sheffield), supported this view and on being put to the vote the motion was lost by a substantial majority.

The President then gave his address. This thoughtful paper was extremely well received and Mr. Cave in thanking the President expressed his pleasure at the thought that this stimulating address would reach a wide public through the medium of *The Library Assistant*.

Votes of thanks were moved from the Chair to Dr. Westwood and Mr. Levi Fox for their co-operation, and to the Honorary Treasurer and the Divisional Honorary Secretaries for their work in preparing and arranging the day's programme, and finally Mr. Whatley, the Honorary Secretary of the Midland Division, thanked the President for his untiring efforts in ensuring the success of the meeting.

E. A. C.

Presidential Address

WILFRED PEARSON

DELIVERED TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE A.A.L. AT STRATFORD-UPON-AVON, 6th JULY, 1949

"*For the natural man the appeal to fact, whether to support old theories or as a basis for new ones, is the final appeal. Hence the importance of factual surveys.*" So runs a quotation from a recent book on social surveys.[1]

Next year we celebrate the centenary of the passing of the first Public Libraries Act. Already, at the conference of our parent body at Eastbourne this year, the progress of past years has been reviewed. Already the point has been made that we should not be content just to review past achievements but that the public librarian should consider the past merely as a base for future endeavour. To this end, Mr. L. R. McColvin, the Honorary Secretary of the Library Association and the author of the famous Report, has written a booklet on behalf of the L. A. Council for circulation to all public library authorities. Its author describes it as a centenary assessment booklet, "a medley of facts and questions . . . with . . . one purpose only—to make you want to ask . . . questions . . . in relation to your own libraries." The suggestion is that each library committee instructs its librarian to answer the questions and to prepare a report on his own library in the light of the answers. So that as a basis for future action each library authority will make "a reasoned, realistic statement of its needs."

[1] JONES, D. CARADOG. *Social Surveys*. Hutchinson. 1949.

Now, I humbly submit that, admirable as this idea is—a realistic appraisal of one's library service—it does not go far enough. Even if conscientiously done, it will smack too much of that "ivory tower" of the profession, the librarian's office. If the person doing the assessment were to sit at the issue desk, it would probably achieve a little more realism. But if we really want to know what the potentialities or limitations of our service are, should we not go out into the highways and byways and jostle with mankind and womankind, wherever they may be—in the 'bus, at the football ground, in the pub, at the kitchen sink, on the allotment, in the factory, in the shop, at the office, in the cinema queue, in the place of worship, in the garden, in the parlour, in the community centre, in the public park? In other words, as organizers of a service for the community, let us go out from our all-too-frequently dirty and unattractive buildings and find out why such a high percentage of the community we are supposed to serve has no use for us.

You may well say, we live as members of that community, we ourselves have grown up or reared a family in that community, our relatives and friends are part of it—surely we know all about them? My submission is that you and I do not. If so, why do our annual reports sound so smug and well-satisfied? Why do our professional councils and committees seem to suffer from ignorance as to how and why books and information in print are used?

The student of human society seeking to produce an effective course of action is driven to seek out the facts by scientific means. I refer, of course, to the survey of a problem by a team of sociological investigators, particularly in a sphere of civilized human activity.

My first proposal then is that the Library Association should in addition to the centenary assessment booklet of public library services go much further and sponsor a nation-wide investigation of books and reading, of the use of books and information in print and of the use of libraries; that this investigation should go further with the determination of seeking out our deficiencies and potentialities. I would emphasize the latter as we want to assess the possible use of books and information in print and of library services in particular.

Now this you will quickly point out is no new idea. I quite agree except to remind you that the attempts to date have either been of American communities and their reading habits or, if undertaken in this country, they have been too localized in character or they have not gone into potentialities of the use of books or information in print sufficiently far enough.

There are some very good reasons why we should have a clear view of what the library service can do for a community. For one thing, our resources are limited, as we are only too painfully aware. I need only remind you that lack of modern and attractive buildings and restrictions on expenditure are with us for many years to come. All the more reason, therefore, for ensuring that our limited resources will be utilized in the most effective and useful manner for the community.

Again, the plea has been reiterated by speaker after speaker at our post-war conferences and similar gatherings that we lack a clear public library policy. To take but two examples from the recent Eastbourne conference: the Honorary Secretary of the L.A. asked, "Do you, in fact, know what job it is of which the library should be capable? I don't," he said, "I'm beginning to get an idea of what it might be, but no one can know what an institution will do until he tries to do it, with all the conditions right." Secondly, at our own A.A.L. Session, Mr. E. V. Corbett, Deputy Chief

Librarian of Croydon, said, "If then we are all to work together to organize a truly national standard of service, someone must decide for us, once and for all, the policy to be pursued; until this clear-cut decision is forthcoming, much of our effort will perforce be misdirected."

I submit therefore that we must have facts, to put our limited resources to the best available use and to give us the policy Mr. Corbett and so many others desire. I further submit that these facts can only be obtained by a sociological investigation or survey by a trained team of scientifically minded workers.

Before the last war the United States produced a number of reading surveys and studies of them published over a number of years. In 1929, for example, Gray and Munroe[2] revealed how important and universal reading is in American society. Of the adults, 97 per cent. read at least newspapers, 75 per cent. magazines and 50 per cent. books of some description. Moreover, the survey emphasized the meaningless trash that was read by the majority. Waples, a later investigator, aptly commented that it explodes the notion that reading is in itself a good thing, a concept which dates from the age of scholasticism when only scholars knew how to write and scholarship was a sacred trust.

Another study, in 1935,[3] discovered that 50 per cent. of the American population could not read with sufficient ease to benefit from the standard material available for adults in public libraries.

In 1940 Douglas Waples and some others published *What Reading Does to People*,[4] a survey of existing literature and source material on the social effects of reading with a suggested programme of further research. It suggested four projects, each centred upon what he called an "obstruction" to the more intelligent uses of reading by American society and claimed that a "fuller understanding of each obstruction should facilitate a more intelligent social control of print in the public interest." The four obstructions for investigation were: (i) the *predisposition* of some types of readers which blocks the influences of any publication they read which does not tell them what they want to be told; (ii) the refusal of some types of readers to read any publications which are likely to challenge their present attitudes; (iii) the relative inaccessibility of publications presenting views other than those held by the voting majority; (iv) the counter-influences of conversation, radio and film.

A further example, and this time of a much more realistic project, is the study made in 1945 for the Book Manufacturers' Institute by Link and Hopf, and published under the title *People and Books: a study of reading and book-buying habits*. The hard-headed business men of the United States' publishing trade were concerned as to the possible trends after the boom of the war years and decided that the industry needed something more reliable than opinions. In their preface they made the point that "however shrewd may be opinions and surmises regarding market trends they are at best based on limited points of view. They vary as much as the experiences and quality of judgement of the individuals who express them!" They decided therefore to obtain *factual* information by means of a *scientific* consumer survey and that the way to obtain it, moreover, was to go right to the people themselves for enlightenment regarding their habits and tastes in books.

[2] GRAY, W. L., and MUNROE, R. *The reading interests and habits of adults*. New York. Macmillan. 1929.

[3] GRAY, W. S., and LEARY, B. E. *What makes a book readable*. Chicago University Press. 1935.

[4] WAPLES, D., BERELSON, B., and BRADSHAW, F. R. *What reading does to people*. Chicago University Press. 1940.

The study revealed many things. To take but one example, the time spent in reading books compared with other activities :—

Listening to radio	49 per cent.
Reading newspapers	21 per cent.
Reading magazines	11 per cent.
Cinema-going	11 per cent.
Reading a book	8 per cent.

Of the total time spent, over twelve times as much was spent on the other activities named as was spent on reading books. Another point brought out was the importance of educational background and the types of books read by persons of different educational levels. Think how useful such a finding might be in strengthening the Library Association's hand in pressing for proper teaching of reading and the different uses of books, both for recreation and for information, in schools. The attraction of this type of survey in this country would be that with a little adaptation it could be used by both the library movement and the book trade and that consequently, financial support for it might be forthcoming from the publishers, booksellers and other interested parties.

Now to come to this side of the ocean, we have had surveys of reading of recent years which revealed much of interest to the authorities carrying them out even if they were not so scientific in their conception or execution as those of the Chicago school. Such names spring to mind as Leeds, Bristol, Middlesex County, Richmond, and Tottenham, not to mention the general surveys carried out by the British Institute of Public Opinion. The latter, for example, in September 1946 and November 1947, asked the question, "Are you reading a novel? Did you borrow it, and if so where from, or is it your own?" Fourteen per cent. of its sample cross-section of the nation were borrowing from a public library and supported the view that the middle and lower-middle classes are the greatest users of public libraries.

The places I have named carried out analyses of the issues on certain days but Tottenham Borough Council went a step further and enlisted the aid of Mass Observation. According to the Interim Report, a sample of 968 people were interviewed and the 41 questions put to them dealt with the habit of reading and its relation to newspaper and magazine reading, their use of and reaction to the public library, and reading tastes. The proportion of members to ex-members of the public library for example was :—

Members	23 per cent.
Former members	25 per cent.
Never been members	52 per cent.

Tottenham Survey is again a useful guide to what might be undertaken on a national basis to give us the *facts* to guide our future development and policy. I feel that some of our questions should go further and get opinion on possible future developments. For example, if your library provided you with more books and periodicals and information on your particular trade or hobby, would you use it? Of course, running through such a survey would be an attempt to get an analysis of book demand.

I admit that an intelligent correlation of many of our public library statistics may give you similar answers to the more *general* questions of a sociological survey. But if we are going to seek grants-in-aid and other financial support, an independent assessment of public library service might be an advantage.

Examples of personal prejudices, which I hope such a survey might reveal to be clearly right, are as follows. I think that such a survey would reveal the need for more

adequate reference library services and our need to study more closely the subject approach to non-fiction stock. We should build up an increasing amount of use of the library by paying closer attention to the provision of technical and scientific books and information in our libraries. Far too much of our book selection savours of the *Times Literary Supplement* and the *Sunday Times*. It can quite well be argued that we should provide a means of escape for the "slaves of the machine" but equally our country needs a well-informed technocracy. Are the additions to the 500 and 600 classes worthy of a great industrial country whose revival depends upon our technical genius and an increase of industrial productivity? So low has the rating of the public library in this field sunk that recently the National Book League was asked to investigate the provision of works technical libraries and our parent Association by-passed.

We take our examinations in bibliography and assistance to readers but how seriously do we take our professional duties afterwards? I remember a library of some size which used to borrow volumes of *Nature* regularly through the Regional Library Bureau. On enquiry, I found that it sold its current copies of *Nature* at the end of each twelve months. If such a library serving a population of 150,000 takes its duties so lightly in this and similar ways, how can it hope to gain the respect of the public? We may criticize the Library Association Council for failure in the field of public relations nationally but we can do much more effective public relations work by taking our job seriously and carrying it out efficiently and thoroughly.

So little do we know of the use and utility of books and information in print, that our profession starts guiltily every time some form of mechanical device comes along. Just before the war we were told that the talking book was going to oust the printed book; more recently, microfilms and microcards have been held over our heads as threats as well as space savers. Personally I think that the book and the printed word in its many forms are still the most effective means of disseminating ideas and knowledge, and will remain so for many years to come.

So much for the sociological type of survey as a basis for facts. There is another survey which might well be reconsidered in the centenary year. I refer to the *Programme for a survey of research libraries in the British Isles* drawn up by the University and Research Section. Arising out of that Section's post-war *Proposals* the aim of the survey is to show the "reader where he will find the collections most useful for his purpose and to show library administrators where the country's collection of books is redundant and where it is deficient." This survey has not been carried out to date because of the lack of the necessary funds. Would it not be worth while as well as a noble gesture to raise a Centenary Fund to carry it out? It would be a gesture to the non-public libraries in this centenary year as a recognition of increasing co-operation with public libraries. It is a belief of mine that our profession as a whole will achieve more public recognition when the public library is more closely linked with the special library, in its work and in the public mind. In fact, the better a library is, increasingly will it attract more minute and detailed requests for books and information, and the more it will need to turn to specialized libraries and outside sources for help in satisfying those demands.

Here I would suggest that closer co-operation among all branches of the library movement is one of the lines of future development. Our reference library services will gain inestimably from increasing co-operation in the exchange of books, periodicals and information.

There is yet another type of survey which might well be considered—a survey and report on the public libraries in a branch area to be carried out by each of the Branches

in the L.A. This has been done most successfully by the London and Home Counties Branch for a number of years The last report was published in 1944. At the Blackpool Conference the idea of each Branch producing a similar report each five years was discussed. I think the idea might well be revived. An assessment and report on a regional basis is much more able to show understanding and appreciation of local conditions and problems. You may recollect how sections of the 1927 Survey of the Library Association and later of the McColvin Report aroused criticism from local patriots.

One hundred years ago our libraries were built to counter vice ; the newsroom was to be a counter-attraction to the gin saloon. To-day we provide books and periodicals of varying quantity and quality with varying standards of service, in buildings not always very attractive. To-day we adopt a passive role—"come and get it" as it were, with the exception of the mobile services in some counties. For the future, may I suggest the public librarian adopts a more positive, forthright attitude to his community. Could he not copy the special library in its study of its users and knowledge of their interests, and the way in which it draws their attention to new publications and knowledge ?

Any such development must be based on knowledge of the community and its needs. Such knowledge will come from factual surveys. Future action can only be resolved on a firm basis of facts. May I plead therefore that in the Centenary Year may be inaugurated not only an assessment by public library authorities of their service, but that in addition, a national sociological survey of books and reading and use of libraries be undertaken. I ask also for a survey of research libraries in the British Isles and for each Branch to publish a report on the progress of libraries in its area. On that basis we should be armed with facts and be able to move forward more confidently and effectively in the future. I make this appeal to you because the A.A.L. has always encouraged a questioning of accepted standards. It has always fostered the healthy discontent of youth with the accepted standards of its day and age.

"In the past the notions upon which the public libraries have designed their administration and policy have been rather vague and founded on the assumption that, organized as they were, they were contributing all in their power to the vocational, cultural and recreational needs of the community."[5] To-day the times demand a much more realistic appreciation of the situation. Surveys such as I have mentioned are the only way whereby we can obtain the facts to guide our decisions. Let us hope that we will not let slip in the centenary year, the opportunity to face up to *our* day and age and take steps towards giving the country a first-class library service.

Post-war proposals and similar notions must be based on a factual appreciation of the situation if they are to be successful. I ask for a more thorough assessment of our public library services and their potentialities to be based on *fact* and not fantasy, please.

[5] MURRAY, I. M. *A page of social history.* In *South African Libraries.* Vol. 6. No. 1. July, 1938 pp. 1–12.

FINAL EXAMINATION—JUNE 1950

Intending candidates for Final Part 3 (Subject approach to the literature of the arts and sciences) are reminded that, under Regulation 8, they are required to give six months' notice of the alternative part they wish to sit.

Since the date of the examination is 28th June, 1950, no applications for this part can be entertained after 28th December, 1949.

The Naked and The Dead

E. P. DUDLEY

AT the beginning of June students at the School of Librarianship, Princeton Street College of Commerce, London, made an informal survey of the treatment in public libraries of Norman Mailer's novel *The Naked and the Dead.*

It was informal in that the results were obtained by methods other than the usual questionnaire to Chief Librarians—by such simple methods as going into a library and asking the staff on duty or looking in the catalogue. It was not a scientific survey and the students wisely refrained from drawing any conclusions—or at least from publishing such conclusions as they may have drawn from other evidence.

A total of 22 municipal and 5 county systems were noted in the survey. The majority of the municipal systems were in London and the Home Counties.

MUNICIPAL SYSTEMS—22

Population (estimated)	*Service Points*	*No. of copies*	*No. of systems without copies*
3,034,000	99	44	8
			Total pop. 726,000
COUNTY LIBRARIES—5			
1,500,000	—	5	2
			Total pop. 840,000

The following additional information is notable :

1. In several cases the matter was reported to " be under consideration " (some two months after publication), but in others requests to purchase had been refused.
2. The total of 44 copies in municipal libraries includes 12 copies in one system.
3. All libraries with one exception adopted methods of segregation. This was usually " in the counter " or " in the Chief's office," though three systems, two of which are amongst the largest and most well known in the country placed the book in the reference library in the literature class.
4. Two systems reported the acquisition of the American edition last year. It excited no comment, but following recent events, has been reserved.
5. Most systems reported heavy reservation, though one system reported only one request—from a librarian not on the staff. It was refused.
6. One system ordered it secondhand before publication and later cancelled the order. One librarian, after reading the Sunday reviews, doubled his order—without success.
7. In many cases, the question of purchase was referred to the Committee and sometimes Committee members read the book before purchase.

Correspondence

A.A.L. VOTING

Miss Leonora Williams, *Assistant, Fulham Public Libraries*, writes :

" The attendance at the Annual General Meeting at Stratford-on-Avon being comparatively small, I feel that the fate of Mr. A. R. Foster's motion to exclude Chief

Librarians from official posts in the Association should not have been settled by the few who were there.

" Surely such an important matter concerns us all, and should be decided by the whole membership of the Association rather than by the minority who are able to attend the A.G.M.—and by the even smaller minority who did not allow a pleasant afternoon and an excellent tea to lull them into the belief that the whole business of the meeting was " much ado about nothing " whatever.

" When the matter is raised again, or when any other matter of equal moment is considered, it ought to be settled by postal ballot. This is the only way in which all members can make use of their right to vote ; it would also protect and encourage the timid junior who might hesitate to proclaim his views in front of his superiors for fear of possible consequences.

" I trust that future business of this kind will be conducted in a manner more in accordance with the principles of the Association."

SUBJECT SPECIALIZATION

Mr. David Leggatt, F.L.A., *Chief Librarian, Greenwich Public Libraries*, writes :

" Mr. Smith, in his interesting article in your July–August number, is hardly correct in describing the Metropolitan Special Collections Scheme as based on " main local industries."

" It is true that the allocation of subjects (published in the *Library Association Record*, June 1949) takes account of a few industries which can be given a local habitation, e.g., Dewey classes 610–619 are allocated to St. Marylebone, and 791–792 to Westminster ; but it was found that the list of subjects in which libraries could claim particular local interests covered only a small proportion even of industrial subjects. The allocation of the majority of industrial subjects was perforce rather arbitrary ; even more arbitrary was the allocation of non-industrial subjects.

" The Metropolitan Scheme was conceived as something more than a collection of local interests. After all, where local interests are well defined, the library has a clear duty to cover the subject, and within the limits of its resources generally tries to do so. The problem in any joint specialization scheme, and one which the Metropolitan Scheme has tried to solve, is the coverage of subjects in which no individual library has an exclusive or particular interest, and to ensure that the less common books on, for example, psychology, ancient history, local government, and mathematics can be provided with the same certainty with which corresponding books on mining, leather, wool can be obtained from the appropriate specializing libraries."

VERTICAL FILES

Mr. F. G. B. Hutchings, F.L.A., *City Librarian, Leeds*, writes :

" Mr. Gardner says I am out of date. Reactionary if he likes ; but out of date on the matter of filing methods, no.

" I know the suspension rack for the vertical file. Just this was in my mind when I wrote, ' Manufacturers have been exercising their wits for years . . . '. Mr. Gardner condemns out of hand the horizontal file. I admit it takes up more space as does the box file ; but as a study of coherence I have yet to see the old Stolzenberg filing method improved upon. Consideration of space alone can justify the vertical file ; but space is often the final arbiter."

(*This correspondence is now closed.—Ed.*)

SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

Mr. N. de R. Barclay, *Assistant, East Sussex County Libraries*, writes :

" I do not think it is fully realized the the Library Association qualifications have little significance in academic circles, and do not even carry exemption from the London Matriculation. If the one requirement of an ordinary School Certificate were abolished, the status of the profession would be further reduced ; (" any fool can become a librarian ! "). The candidates for the new School Certificate will be far better off than their predecessors, because they can select their own half-dozen subjects. A student who cannot pass this or an equivalent examination would find the Library Association's Finals extraordinarily stiff going."

Students' Problems

A. J. WALFORD

THE JUNE EXAMINATIONS

A FAIR enough set of papers, on the whole. There was, however, in the Registration papers the occasional question which was much more the province of the Final examination ; also, particularly in Registration Cataloguing, the tendency to set questions which required longer than the allotted time for adequate treatment. Here, one feels, are legitimate grounds for complaint.

ENTRANCE EXAMINATION : by R. L. Collison

The revised syllabus for 1950 which is devised " to assess the suitability of candidates for librarianship," is to substitute *Organisation and Method* for *Library Administration and Procedure*, and an essay for *Choice of Books and General Knowledge of Current English Literature*. It is difficult to believe, however, that these changes will achieve a more searching test than the papers set this June. The excellent choice of questions offered to candidates ensured that the new entrant to the profession who took an intelligent interest in his job and in everything which went on around him stood a very good chance of passing this examination provided he was in the habit of reading widely and critically.

In the first paper candidates were asked to state which they preferred : moderate fines, heavy fines, or no fines, but a polite remonstrance to the defaulter. This last choice, which many more senior members will immediately associate with the name of Dagenham, is one which presupposes the kind of social conscience on the part of the reader and the " just beast " attitude of the assistant which can rarely be found together in most towns. The British do not regard the keeping of a popular book for an excessive period as criminal or anti-social, and mostly resent any suggestion that their negligence is such. Heavy fines are effective the first time, but may also result in the loss of otherwise desirable readers. Moderate fines, with special appeal notices for the return of popular books, would best seem to meet the case, for with the majority of books no great harm is done if they are kept six weeks or more, provided the reader is really making use of them. Another question asked whether it is possible to change assistants' duties periodically without interfering with the efficiency of the service. The long term view must be taken here : while the public may be somewhat inconvenienced from time to time by sudden changes of assistants' duties, on the other hand they gain immeasurably from the wider experience of the profession as a whole,

and it is noticeable that this is generally accepted, since even the most conservative authorities tend to appoint librarians with experience in a number of libraries or departments, rather than those who have confined their work to a single system.

The second paper gave a chance to the students who read their professional journals, by asking for information on a Central (or National) Cataloguing System (or Bureau). This was a good opportunity to discuss the relative merits of Harrods' printed cards, and the possibilities of cutting up and mounting the entries in the British National Bibliography. In the third paper, a question on Trollope was a gift to any regular wireless listener. A question with a wider choice asked for a brief appreciation of one twentieth-century author who has used at least three literary forms for his writings : how many chose Hardy, D. H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, T. S. Eliot, Clemence Dane, Galsworthy or Chesterton, quite apart from Rilke, Cocteau, Schnitzler or Tagore.

The fourth paper—on Reference Material and Methods—asked for a detailed description of the *Britannica* : how many remembered to mention the policy of continuous revision, the publication of annual supplements, or the bibliographies which—as Mr. Roberts points out—can so often be discovered at the ends of individual sections in the case of the longer articles ? The second question required some thought : " Define the scope and arrangement of the *Library Association subject index to periodicals*. Say why your library should use it, or, if you think it should not, say why you think so." What points can the examiners have hoped to elicit by means of the second sentence in this question ? Did they hope to bring out the genera opinion on the desirability of keeping it right up to date, or of adding monthly supplements and multi-annual cumulations ? Or was it designed for the candidates from special libraries who might say that its scope and policy was too general for the majority of their purposes, and that the selective principle on which the *Index* is based meant that they could not rely on its having netted every item for which they might have to search ?

REGISTRATION : Classification

Full of interest for the venturesome candidate, although perhaps less easy than other Registration papers.

The value of the Five Predicables and/or the Tree of Porphyry was the burden of Q.1. Bifurcation is implicit in all forms of division, however obscured this fact may become. In book classification, as *one* form of classification, we depart far indeed from our logical framework in the interests of practical usefulness. Q.2 (on close classification in a system where only a small proportion of the stock is on the open shelves) needs relating to examples, such as the Mitchell Library. Clearly, with a large stock in stack-rooms, the more detailed the finding number the quicker the book will be found.

Q.3 states a proposition which is not entirely acceptable and ends with the words " thought-content." This may have frightened off some, and it is a pity that the statement was not re-worded more simply. The candidate who tackled this question did well to cite a number of examples of book subjects. To find a specific place for a book in the schedules of a classification is to take into account both its topic coverage and the angle of approach. If the specific subject of a book is the food habits of insects, ideally we should place it under Zoology : Insects, and then apply a special table to cover Dietary. But what of polytopical books ? The question has many ramifications and, as worded, is surely for Finalists.

Q.4 is an old friend, and those who have mastered the appropriate passages in Dewey's Introduction will have at least the elements of the answer. Q.5, on the relationship between the processes of classification and cataloguing, should also have been welcome. Q.6 required the 'unbuilding' of 6 class marks, 3 of them Dewey, 1 U.D.C., 1 Brown and 1 Library of Congress. Good practice, this. But who, pray, would, with the examiners, classify a History of Swiss poetry at 809·949941 ?

An obvious objection to Dewey's treatment of Geography (Q.7) is that the material is scattered (380 ; 527 ; 551 ; 581·9 ; 910–919 ; etc.) ; and in 910–919 itself we note lack of true association of contiguous regions (*e.g.*, Asia, or Africa), a pronounced American bias ; the subordination of Geography, in general, to History. To Q.8, given the subject, we build the class hierarchy upon it (*e.g.*, *Eminent Victorians* : Biography—Collective—British—19th century). Q.9, less enterprising, deals with the pros and cons of book-display, while Q.10 has fun with the various associations of the term 'Mercury' in the Dewey relative index.

REGISTRATION : Cataloguing. By S. J. Butcher

A balanced, straightforward paper well within the scope of the syllabus, the only disturbing feature being the tendency to compress too much into a single question. There is a physical limit to the amount a candidate can write in thirty minutes and QQ.2 and 5 are as much a test of stamina as of knowledge.

Q.1 asked for definitions of ten familiar cataloguing terms and held few terrors for the candidate who had followed a systematic course of preparation. The danger in this type of question is the tendency to enlarge and illustrate with the result that the answer exceeds the average time allowance of thirty minutes. A rigid observance of the three-minute time-limit for each term is the best approach.

Q.2 made candidates work hard for marks. To compare the British Museum, Cutter and A.A. Code treatment of four rules in thirty minutes is a severe test of the candidate's ability to write quickly. Obviously the examiners do not intend this examination to be merely a test of memory.

Q.3. Few candidates can have had any complaint about this question asking for an indication of the scope of four books (other than language dictionaries) useful as reference books in a cataloguing department. Familiarity with the tools of the craft is the first requirement of an apprentice cataloguer. The question covers a wide field and the following is only a selection of suitable titles : *Dictionary of National Biography* ; *Who's Who* ; Smith's *Classical Dictionary* ; Roget's *Thesaurus* : Gazetteer ; Encyclopædia ; Atlas ; Catalogues of other libraries (*e.g.*, British Museum, Liverpool and Glasgow) ; *List of subject headings* ; Schedules of the classification scheme in use ; Cutter ; A.A. Code ; Local Code ; Wilson's *Cumulative Index*.

Q.4. This was a topical question which afforded an excellent opportunity for any candidate who had included background reading of the professional journals in his preparation. The main advantages are, of course, economy, consistency and efficient co-ordination while the disadvantages are more apparent than real. The question invited discussion as well as enumeration of the pros and cons.

Q.5. University and County Library assistants must have rubbed their hands with glee when they discovered this question in the paper. Even the municipal librarian could not complain for the subject of university and county library cataloguing has received a good deal of attention in the manuals and journals. The examiners are to be congratulated on giving all sections of library work a fair allocation of questions.

Q.6 gave the resourceful candidate a further opportunity to develop an argument from his own experience. Policy and methods for junior library catalogues offer plenty of scope and such topics as simplified cataloguing, suitable annotations and guiding can be introduced. The importance of the junior library catalogue as a training ground for the adult library should not be underestimated.

Q.7. The tendency of the examiners to crowd too much into a thirty-minute question has been mentioned before. Q.7 is another example of an overloaded memory test needing fast writing. To give the heading for a main entry together with necessary references and added entries for five books is a fair test for half an hour and provides the student time to think out his answer. To ask also for the essentials of the relevant A.A. Code rules seems an unnecessary addition.

Q.8 asked for a full layout of entries for a dictionary catalogue with a brief annotation for the main entry. It should be noted that there is no mention of the word " indicate " in the question. There is a spelling error in the text which must have caused the well-read candidate some concern. If it was deliberate then the examiners deserve censure but if it was accidental they find themselves in good company for Whitaker's *Cumulative Book List* also interprets FORSTER as FOSTER.

This is a simple example of compound surname. Candidates who entered the work under Arnold-Foster (or Arnold-Forster) can be assured that this is the correct heading under the confusing circumstances. The foreword by Lord Aberconway and the chapter on Magnolias should be mentioned in the title. The Council for the preservation of rural England is better in a note than as a series. An added author entry should be made under this body with an analytical author entry under Johnstone, G. H. and an author reference under Foster, W. Arnold. The subject entry is SHRUBS with an analytical subject entry under MAGNOLIAS.

Q.9 asks the candidate to make a difficult decision without supplying the necessary information to guide his choice. The notes should make it clear whether the text is secondary to the commentary—otherwise the decision is founded on guesswork. Since there is no indication of the relative importance of the text the candidate who entered this book under SHAKESPEARE should be given every consideration. The index entries for the classified catalogue offer few difficulties.

Q.10 was the standard requirement of assigning subject headings to ten book titles and indicating necessary references. My selections are given below.

(*a*)	COLOUR	Chemistry	*see also*
(*b*)	WEATHER FORECASTING ..	Weather lore	*see also*
		Forecasting, Weather	*see*
(*c*)	PSYCHOLOGY, Pathological ..	Pathological Psychology	*see*
		Diseases, Mental	*see*
		Mental Diseases	*see*
(*d*)	MOSAICS, Byzantine	Byzantine Mosaics	*see*
		Decoration and ornament	*see also*
(*e*)	VENTILATION		
	HEATING		
(*f*)	CLOTHING AND DRESS ..	Dress	*see* Clothing and dress
	GLOVES	Costume	*see also* Clothing and dress
	FANS	Fashion	*see also* Clothing and dress
(*g*)	CHILDREN—Management ..	Children—Training	*see*

(*h*) LABOUR PARTY (Great Britain)
(*i*) COSTUME DESIGN
(*j*) POULTRY

REGISTRATION : Bibliography. By S. J. Butcher

Once again the examiners are to be congratulated on producing an enterprising paper which, while giving the conscientious student a fair allocation of questions, allowed the candidate with initiative plenty of scope. This was a fair, comprehensive and well-balanced paper on a subject covering a very wide field.

Q.1 was original and topical. With the ending of quotas for paper it is possible that some of the pre-war book production will reappear. The war-time economy standard gave us a compact book which was economical of shelving space. Many of the features were undesirable, but publishers and librarians have learnt from war-time experience and there is little excuse for any deterioration of standards. This was a good question calling for background knowledge, observation and original thought. The text-books would have been of little assistance.

Q.2. The distinction between permanence and durability should have been easy to deduce. A book issued thirty or forty times a year needs properties of durability different from the permanence of a bound copy of a newspaper. The consideration of the properties of leathers, papers and binding threads afforded an opportunity to introduce knowledge acquired when visiting paper mills and bookbinding establishments.

Q.3 asked for a brief description of the main stages of the manufacture of paper. It involved consideration of both hand and machine methods. Many candidates who knew the subject matter probably had difficulty in presentation.

Q.4 was the well-known " write notes on " eight terms which should be familiar to every candidate. It is better to be concise rather than comprehensive with this type of question. Time is the important factor.

QQ.5 and 6 on illustration processes required a certain amount of original thought. An essential part of the preparation for this examination is the acquaintance with the type of reproduction made by each method. A careful study of the illustrations in Penrose's *Annual* will repay the student of this subject.

Q.7 was a familiar " text-book " question asking for the characteristics of morocco, pigskin, calf and vellum. Candidates should not have met any difficulties here. Fully answered in Coutts & Stephen, Chapter IV.

QQ.8 and 9 are answered in Chapters 5 and 3 of the second part of McKerrow's *Introduction to Bibliography*.

Q.10 is another text-book " hardy annual " fully dealt with in the chapter on Description in Esdaile's *A student's manual of Bibliography*.

REGISTRATION : Assistance to Readers

A paper on which opinions will be divided. The assistant in the public library was admirably catered for ; less so, his colleague in the university and special library.

Q.1 was unexceptionable : it asked for knowledge of five of nine well-known reference works, one of which (Kempe's *Engineer's year-book*) is a ' set ' reference book for the Entrance Examination. Q.2, on Government statistical publications and foreign trade data in particular, was a worthwhile question. The answer, by the way, is neatly covered in pages 60–62 of the British Library of Political and Economic Science's *Guide to the collections* (1948), which the enterprising student should have perused by this time.

QQ.3 and 4 probably pleased many. Only a few would hesitate over a list of twelve essential annuals for a reference library, or fail to describe four general encyclopædias, one of them in a foreign language. Q.5 was equally accommodating : it called for a brief evaluative description of five of seven notable bibliographical tools. The item *House of Commons* literary *bibliographies* provides another of those printers' errors which are appearing rather too often in this of all papers.

At this point the candidate's run of comparatively easy questions seems to have halted. Q.6 might with perfect justice have been thrown to the Finalist lions. I offer the following sources of information :—

Cathode ray oscillography :	Hutchinson's *Technical and scientific encyclopædia ; Electrical engineer's reference book.*
Early history of trade unions :	*Encyclopædia Britannica ;* Seligman ; the Webbs' *History of Trade Unionism ;* as reinforcements, social histories such as Cole and Postgate.
Shell concrete structures :	*Bibliography of cement and concrete ; Engineering index.*
English translations of Strindberg's novels :	B.M. catalogue (1881–1905), plus Smith's *Dictionary of modern European literature ;* Baker's *Guide to the best fiction.* (It is assumed that the current B.M. catalogue in the B.M. Reading Room is ruled ' out of order.')

Of the last four questions three were too obviously concerned with public library practice. The assistant in the special library has usually very little to do with guides to music and gramophone record collections (Q.7), or with posters, handbills and syllabuses (containing booklists) for a series of lectures (Q.8), still less with a programme for a visit of a senior school class to a public library (Q.10). One hopes that alternatives to such questions will be provided next time.

Q.9, on the other hand, was for everybody. Books not in stock can, it is true, be procured quickly, on occasion, by purchase ; but there is much to be said for inter-library loans, co-operation in general, and the use of subscriptions to proprietary libraries such as Lewis's.

N.B.—*It is hoped to include notes on the Final Examination papers in the November–December issue.*

On the Editor's Table

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION. *Division of Cataloging and Classification. A.L.A. cataloging rules for author and title entries.* 2nd ed. Edited by Clara Beetle. 1949. (Chicago : A.L.A. $5.) (*Obtainable from the Woolston Book Company, Byard Lane, Nottingham.*)

This is a revised and much enlarged edition of the main part of the Anglo-American Code, first published in 1908. A preliminary second edition was published in 1941, comparatively few copies of which seem to have reached this country. It ran to over 400 pages and included two parts : Part I, Entry and heading ; Part II, Description of book ; and Appendixes. As the result of the criticism that parts of the rules were over-elaborate and likely to make cataloguing unduly expensive, the A.L.A. decided to proceed with the revision of Part I, and further work on Part II was deferred. Accordingly the 65 pages of Part II, dealing with transcription of title, imprint, collation, notes and contents, are here omitted. The present work comprises Rules of Entry and Heading, with four Appendixes : Glossary ; Abbreviations Used in Headings; Rules of Style for Headings ; Transliteration ; and an Index by Bertha M. Frick.

The charge of over-elaborateness and, probably, an eye on printing costs, have led to some curtailment of the text of the preliminary edition, in which the glossary, the treatment of music, and the rules for incunabula, among other things, have suffered. References to the rule numbers in the 1908 edition, which

were given in the preliminary edition, have been omitted. This Revised Edition does not supersede the preliminary edition, which remains of much value to students, and is likely to become a "scarce" book.

If it has not the plenitude of the preliminary edition, the present revision is still a comprehensive and valuable work, incorporating the results of much and varied practical experience. It is an essential reference book for almost any library in English-speaking countries. It will be warmly welcomed by cataloguers on this side, if not by examination candidates. Many rules one had wished for in the 1908 Code are here given, and many more have been much expanded and clarified. Quite full treatment is given to the Bible, oriental names, and geographic headings, while corporate bodies are exhaustively dealt with in a most valuable set of rules. More recent material is provided for in rules for radio scripts and motion-picture scenarios.

It is a reasonable code, allowing for alternative forms of entry where appropriate. For example, the rule for the entry of noblemen under the latest title allows entry under an earlier title or under the family name if these are decidedly better known, and the rule for the entry of pseudonymous works under the author's real name allows entry under the pseudonym in certain cases. (Perhaps similar provision might have been made under Rule 39A for names like Anthony à Wood, where the prefix is best ignored.) This will not please the purists, who will have no exceptions, and who forget that consistency ceases to be a virtue when it affronts common sense.

The appendix on Transliteration is clearly printed and includes the new Russian orthography. A fuller glossary would have been useful. We note, by the way, that "Cross reference" seems to be equated with "Reference." But surely a Cross reference is a direction from one heading to another and back again to the first heading, e.g., Brown *see also* Browne; Browne *see also* Brown?

More space would be required to review the Rules adequately. The best test of such a code is its use in practical work over an extended period. We shall be surprised if it often fails the consulter. The publication of the book is a notable achievement on which the compilers are to be congratulated, and not least the editor who has acquitted herself very creditably of a difficult task. F. E. S.

BRITISH LIBRARY OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SCIENCE. *Guide to the collections.* 1948. (2*s.* 6*d.*)

This excellent and remarkably cheap guide, the revised edition of the second part of *A reader's guide* (3rd ed., 1945), will already have been amply reviewed elsewhere. It has special value for the devotee of bibliography and of the social sciences, however, and one or two points may usefully be stressed here.

Particularly apposite, throughout, are the detailed and up-to-date bibliographical aids which appear under each major subject. The sections on Government Publications (National; International Organizations); Statistics; Economics, Commerce and Finance; Law; International Affairs, are, for their brevity, excellent keys to source material. United States material is given some prominence, and there is also a satisfying final section on Russian publications, with the stress again on bibliographical aids. The index is detailed; misprints are comparatively negligible.

The student of bibliography should note that the dates within brackets which follow titles are those of publication; and that the British Library's holdings, though vast, are not necessarily exhaustive. This applies particularly to runs of annual quick-reference tools.

I would urge all serious-minded assistants to expend half-a-crown on the purchase of this guide before the present edition is exhausted. A. J. W.

GLASGOW CORPORATION PUBLIC LIBRARIES. *Union catalogue of additions, classified, annotated and indexed.* Part IV. 1949.

Parts I–III of the Glasgow Union Catalogue, published in 1929, 1934 and 1938 respectively, have proved invaluable to both librarians and students in the past. For the librarian they provide an important bibliographical tool, each Part containing over 20,000 entries, arranged in strict Dewey order, and covering the holdings of the Mitchell Library and the Commercial Library in Miller Street as well as the District Libraries. The result is, from the public library point of view, a very representative collection indeed. Part IV lists accessions from 1935 to 1938 inclusive, and it carries on the fine tradition. The type is larger, but the general arrangement and the number of entries are much the same.

From the student's point of view, this volume and its predecessors well repay close examination. To see the schedules of the Dewey classification in cold print is one thing; to see it adapted for shelf purposes, as it so often is, is quite another. Here is a printed classified catalogue which follows the original Dewey closely and, above all, consistently. Decisions have had to be made: there is the careful separation of material under 385–388 from that under 656. But this is inevitable. For a glimpse of orthodoxy in the application of Dewey, the reader is advised to glance at the Glasgow holdings under classes 800 and 900.

The cataloguer needs no reminding that there are few better examples of the combined subject and author index to the classified catalogue than that of Glasgow. Added entries and annotations have, on the whole, been kept to the bare minimum, but the examples given are useful. It is hoped that the Glasgow Corporation will not weary of well-doing and are preparing the issue of Part V of the Union Catalogue, presumably covering the war years. A. J. W.